

Message Text

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ACTION EPA-04

INFO OCT-01 EA-09 ISO-00 OES-07 ABF-01 /022 W

-----014377 120256Z /66

P 120047Z JUL 77

FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0842

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 CANBERRA 4840

FOR: EPA/OIA

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SENV, ECEM, AS

SUBJ: INFORMATION ON PESTICIDE USE AND RESIDUES

REF: (A) STATE 114232 (B) STATE 126341

1. FOLLOWING INFORMATION PROVIDED IN RESPONSE TO REFTELS. EMBASSY REGRETS DELAY IN PROVIDING INFO. HOWEVER, DEPARTMENT OF PRIMARY INDUSTRY, WHICH HAS JURISDICTION IN THESE MATTERS, IS PRESENTLY UNDER CONSIDERABLE WORK PRESSURE AND WAS UNABLE TO PROVIDE THE INFORMATION IN TIME TO MEET DEADLINE. INFORMATION PROVIDED BELOW IS SUMMARY OF DETAILED RESPONSE PROVIDED BY PRIMARY INDUSTRY. COPY OF PRIMARY INDUSTRY LETTER WITH ITS ATTACHMENTS BEING FORWARDED VIA AIR POUCH.

(A) EDUCATION PROGRAMS ON THE PROPER USE AND APPLICATION OF PESTICIDES:

ALL REGISTERED PESTICIDES MUST BEAR LABELS WHICH CONTAIN INFORMATION NECESSARY FOR THEIR PROPER USE. HOWEVER, NO LEGISLATION EXISTS WHICH COMPELS USERS TO ADHERE STRICTLY TO THESE DIRECTIONS. GOA HAS THEREFORE TENDED TO RELY LARGELY ON EDUCATION AND EXTENSION AS MEANS OF OBTAINING COOPERATION OF FARMERS AND OTHER PESTICIDE USERS. THESE PROGRAMS ARE INITIATED BY VARIOUS STATE GOVERNMENTS, BUT FEDERAL GOVERNMENT PROVIDES ASSISTANCE BY WAY OF

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PUBLICATIONS AND LITERATURE. REGULATORY CONTROL PROCEDURES MAKE IT AN OFFENCE TO SELL UNREGISTERED PRODUCTS. IN ADDITION, THERE IS LEGISLATION IN SEVERAL STATES WHICH MAKES IT AN OFFENCE TO USE CHEMICALS OTHER THAN THOSE SPECIFIED FOR CERTAIN PURPOSES. FOR EXAMPLE, THE REGULATIONS UNDER THE QUEENSLAND STOCK ACTS ST LI WHICH CHEMICALS MAY BE USED FOR THE TREATMENT OF LIVESTOCK

BY DIPPING.

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:) ARE THERE MECHANISMS FOR TRACKING ACTUAL (RATHER THAN RECOMMENDED) PESTICIDE USE PATTERNS: AUSTRALIA MAKES EXTENSIVE USE OF THE PROCEDURE OF SURVEILLANCE OVER THE OCCURRENCE OF PESTICIDE RESIDUES IN AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES AND IN HUMAN FOOD DERIVED FROM THOSE COMMODITIES. AUSTRALIA WOULD NOT QUALIFY AS AN EXPORTER OF MEAT TO THE U.S. IF THEY WERE UNABLE TO DEMONSTRATE EXISTENCE OF A RESIDUE SURVEILLANCE SCHEME AT LEAST COMPARABLE TO U.S. SCHEME. AUSTRALIA'S NATIONAL PESTICIDE RESIDUE SURVEY MEETS THIS REQUIREMENT AND RESULTS ARE REPORTED ANNUALLY TO USDA AS REQUIRED BY U.S. LAW. BESIDES PROVIDING AN OVERALL PICTURE OF THE RESIDUE STATUS OF AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES, THE SURVEY ALSO PROVIDES AN OPPORTUNITY FOR EARLY DETECTION OF TRENDS AND CHANGES WHICH MIGHT RESULT FROM VARIATION IN PESTICIDE USE. IN ADDITION TO THE NATIONAL SURVEY, THERE IS AN ONGOING TOTAL DIET STUDY FOR WHICH THE AUSTRALIAN DEPT. OF HEALTH IS PRIMARILY RESPONSIBLE.

(C) WHAT PESTICIDES ARE CURRENTLY APPLIED TO DAIRY PRODUCTS, APPLES, RICE, LEAFY VEGETABLES, BANANAS? DOCUMENT SENT UNDER SEPARATE COVER "PB158A - AGRICULTURAL AND VETERINARY CHEMICALS - WHITHOLDING PERIODS, MAXIMUM UNCLASSIFIED

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RESIDUE LIMITS AND POISONS SCHEDULES" PROVIDES THIS INFORMATION.

(C) STATISTICS ON ACCIDENTS AND/OR DEATHS THAT HAVE OCCURRED FROM USE OF TOXIC PESTICIDES.

(I) MORTALLY DUE TO ACCIDENTAL POISONING BY PESTICIDES, FERTILISERS AND PLANT FOODS, 1975 - 7 PERSONS.

(II) ACCIDENTAL POISONINGS DUE TO PESTICIDES, FERTILISERS AND PLANT FOODS, REPORTED TO NATIONAL POISONS SERVICE, DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, 1975 - 365 PERSONS.

BY FAR THE GREATER PROPORTION OF REPORTED PESTICIDE POISONINGS (APPROX 86 PCT) ARE IN CHILDREN LESS THAN 5 YEARS OF AGE. THIS DATA SUGGESTS THAT ACCESS TO HOME GARDEN CHEMICALS MIGHT BE A MAJOR CONTRIBUTORY FACTOR.

ADDITIONAL STATISTICS SENT UNDER SEPARATE COVER.

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0843

UNCLAS SECTION 2 OF 2 CANBERRA 4840

FOR: EPA/OIA

(E) WHICH PESTICIDES HAVE BEEN BANNED FOR USE IN

AUSTRALIA:

HEXACHLOROBENZENE IS THE ONLY PESTICIDE WHICH HAS ACTUALLY BEEN BANNED IN AUSTRALIA IN RECENT YEARS. IT WAS MANUFACTURED IN AUSTRALIA SOME YEARS AGO, BUT PRODUCTION CEASED BEFORE THE BAN WAS IMPOSED AND HAS NOT BEEN RESUMED. NO EXPORT CAN TAKE PLACE.

(F) STATUS OF CERTAIN PESTICIDES:

(I) ALDRIN AND DIELDRIN: ALTHOUGH BOTH WERE EXTENSIVELY USED UNTIL 1962, SINCE THAT TIME THE NUMBER OF USES AND QUANTITY OF INSECTICIDE HAVE DECLINED SHARPLY. THE ONLY SIGNIFICANT APPLICATION HAS BEEN FOR PROTECTION OF TIMBER STRUCTURES AGAINST TERMITES. USE ON ANIMALS HAS BEEN DISALLOWED FOR APPROX 15 YEARS. THIS IS AN APPROVED AND ACCEPTED USE OF THESE SUBSTANCES AGAINST CERTAIN SOIL INSECTS ATTACKING CORN, POTATOES AND ORCHARD TREES AND FOR PROTECTION OF TROPICAL LEGUME SEED AGAINST HARVESTER ANTS AND AMNEMUS WEEVILS. USE OF DIELDRIN IN AUSTRALIAN AGRICULTURE IS THE SUBJECT OF CONTINUING REVIEW, WITH THE AIM OF PHASING OUT ITS USE.

(II) DDT: FOR SOME YEARS IT HAS BEEN AUSTRALIAN POLICY TO PHASE OUT REMAINING USES OF DDT AS SUITABLE ALTERNATIVES BECOME AVAILABLE. GREATER PART OF DDT IMPORTED INTO

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AUSTRALIA IS USED ON COTTON AND TOBACCO. IT IS NOT RECOMMENDED FOR USE ON CEREAL CROPS AND IT MAY NOT BE USED ON PASTURES FOR DAIRY ANIMALS OR ANIMALS BEING FINISHED FOR

SLAUGHTER. IT IS NOT MANUFACTURED IN AUSTRALIA AND ONLY 4.6 TONNES WERE IMPORTED IN 1976.

(III) CHLORDANE: LIMITED APPLICATION IN SOIL TREATMENTS FOR CONTROL OF CERTAIN INSECT PESTS. OTHERWISE ITS USE IS RESTRICTED TO CONTROL OF TERMITES AND ANTS IN BUILDINGS.

(IV) HEPTACHLOR. SAME AS CHLORDANE.

(V) ENDRIN: REGISTERED FOR USE ON COTTON AND TOBACCO CROPS, POTATO PLANTS AND AS DORMANT SPRAY ON PEACH TREES. AMOUNT USED IS SMALL AND DECLINING.

(VI) KEPONE: RECOMMENDED IN ONE STATE ONLY TO CONTROL BANANA WEEVIL BORER.

(VII) STRYCHNINE: WIDELY USED IN THE PAST AS A RODENTICIDE AND DESTRUCTION OF CERTAIN OTHER VERTEBRATE PESTS. READY TO USE BAITS CONTAINING LESS THAN 1 PCT STRYCHNINE ARE STILL SOLD IN SOME STATES, BUT OTHER STATES HAVE RECENTLY IMPOSED WHAT AMOUNTS TO A TOTAL PROHIBITION ON THE SALE OF STRYCHNINE EXCEPT FOR EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES.

(VIII) MERCURY CONTAINING PESTICIDES: HAS BEEN WIDELY USED. USAGE FOR SEED DRESSING PURPOSES WOULD HAVE ACCOUNTED FOR MAJOR PART OF AGRICULTURAL INPUT. USE OF MERCURIAL COMPOUNDS AS SLIMICIDES IN PULP AND PAPER INDUSTRY HAS BEEN DISCONTINUED.

(G) LAWS PERTAINING TO PESTICIDES:
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LEGISLATION RELATING TO PESTICIDES IS FORWARDED UNDER SEPARATE COVER (DOCUMENT PB181A).

(H) ARE THERE PESTICIDES WHICH HAVE NOT BEEN REGISTERED FOR USE IN AUSTRALIA? THERE ARE PROBABLY MANY PESTICIDES FOR WHICH AUSTRALIAN CLEARANCE OR REGISTRATION HAS NEVER BEEN SOUGHT. MIREX, FOR EXAMPLY HAS NEVER BEEN REGISTERED, WHILE ISOBENZAN, ALTHOUGH ONCE REGISTERED, WAS WITHDRAWN FROM SALE SOME YEARS BEFORE ITS MANUFACTURE CEASED.
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Message Attributes

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Decaption Note:
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Disposition Approved on Date:
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Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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Errors: N/A
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Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
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